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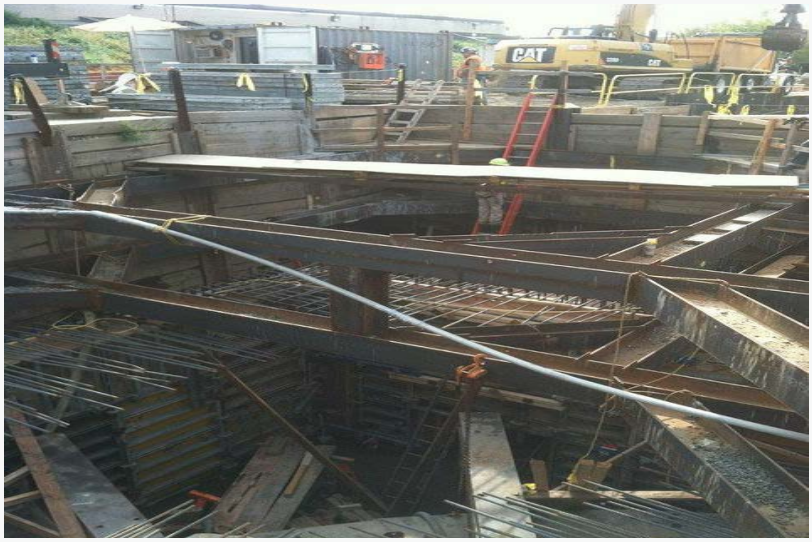

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Completion of $30 Million Interceptor Sewer Line in College Point Improves the Ecological Health of Flushing Bay, Powells Cove and Little Bay

Modeling Shows That the New Interceptor Sewer Will Reduce Overflows into Nearby Waterways by Nearly 140 Million Gallons a Year

A Map and Photos of the Project are Available on DEP's Flickr Page

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Emily Lloyd today announced the activation of a new, large interceptor sewer line in the College Point neighborhood that will significantly reduce Combined Sewer Overflows into Flushing Bay, Powell's Cove and Little Bay. On a dry weather day, the Tallman Island Wastewater Treatment Plant located on College Point receives, cleans and disinfects approximately 55 million gallons of wastewater. During wet weather, the Plant has been handling approximately 120 million gallons a day. In order to increase the volume of wastewater treated at the Plant during wet weather, in 2012 DEP began the construction of a 2,100-foot-long, six-foot-high by six-foot-wide interceptor sewer line running north from the intersection of 131st Street and 11th Avenue, under Powell's Cove Park, to the Tallman Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. Construction was completed in late 2014 and DEP is now in the final stages of restoring and upgrading the Park. By allowing the Tallman Island facility to treat up to 160 million gallons of wastewater a day during wet weather, the $30 million project is expected to reduce Combined Sewer Overflows into local waterways by nearly 140 million

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gallons each year.

“The completion of this new interceptor sewer line will result in cleaner and healthier water in Flushing Bay, Powell’s Cove and Little Bay,” said **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd**. “We are also pleased to have been able to add wetlands and improve Powell’s Cove Park for the enjoyment of local residents.”

“These enhanced uplands and wetlands are a valuable addition to Powell's Cove ecosystem, and will provide habitat for a number of species including snowy egrets, marsh wren, and herons,” said **NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP**. “We are grateful to the Department of Environmental Protection for their partnership in preserving and maintaining our city’s natural areas.”

"The Design Commission congratulates DEP on a project that not only provides critical infrastructure to protect the quality of New York City’s waterways but also employs natural shoreline stabilization strategies like tidal wetlands to ensure a sustainable and beautiful waterfront,” said **Signe Nielsen, FASLA, President of the Public Design Commission of the City of New York**.

“The new interceptor sewer is an important component of our legal agreement with the City,” said **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Acting Commissioner Marc Gerstman**. “Moving the wastewater to the Tallman Island plant for treatment, together with the green infrastructure commitments, will continue to improve water quality and increase recreational opportunities in Flushing and Little Neck Bays.”

“The completion of the interceptor sewer line is a success on all fronts,” said **New York State Assembly Member Michael Simanowitz**. “Reducing overflows into our waterways is not only an environmental victory, but will improve the lives of the many Queens families through the renovations to Powell’s Cove Park. The opening of shorefront green space to our residents is a welcome addition to the neighborhood.”

Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Council Environmental Protection Committee, said, "The new College Point interceptor sewer line will reduce Combined Sewer Overflows into our waterways by nearly 140 million gallons each year. The new project will lead to cleaner and healthier water near the Tallman Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. Our waterways will be better protected and the public health of all neighborhood residents will improve. This project is a significant step toward our city's goal to reduce carbon emissions and ensure more environmentally-friendly policies. I thank DEP Commissioner Lloyd for her leadership on this issue."

The project began with the construction of a diversion chamber under the intersection of 131st Street and 11th Avenue, which directs the wastewater into the new interceptor sewer line. Once that was completed, excavation and construction of the 2,100 foot-long interceptor sewer line commenced. After the new interceptor sewer line was completed and connected to the Tallman Island Wastewater Treatment Plant, the existing section of sewer running under 11th Avenue between 130th and 131st Street was disconnected and a valve was opened to allow the flow to run north from 131st Street and 11th Avenue into the new interceptor sewer. In addition, to optimize the capacity of the new interceptor, modifications were made to three key regulators within the existing drainage system. By enlarging outlets and raising a weir at these three junction points, more wastewater now flows towards the new interceptor and less is diverted as overflow. This work took place at 11th Avenue and 138th Street, 7th Avenue and 144th Street and 15th Drive and Willets Point Boulevard.

Once construction of the enhanced drainage system was complete, DEP coordinated with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Public Design Commission on the restoration of Powell’s Cove Park. As part of the work, approximately 700 new trees and shrubs were planted, 1.3 acres of tidal wetlands were enhanced and a quarter acre of new wetland was added. In addition, three acres of grass and wildflowers were replanted, a new split rail fence was added and a dilapidated wooden pier, which posed a safety hazard,

was removed.

Over the last decade, DEP has invested more than $10 billion in upgrades to wastewater treatment plants and related efforts to reduce Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) and the cleanliness and health of New York City harbor water continues to improve to levels not seen in more than a century. However, CSOs remain the city's major harbor water quality challenge. To further reduce CSOs, the City launched the Green Infrastructure Plan, an alternative approach to improving water quality that combines traditional infrastructure upgrades, such as the Whitestone Interceptor, and the integration of green infrastructure to capture and retain stormwater runoff before it ever enters the sewer system. In the Flushing Bay area, DEP has built 45 specially designed curbside gardens, or bioswales, that collect and absorb stormwater before it ever reaches the sewer system where it can contribute to CSOs. There are currently 450 more bioswales under construction throughout the drainage area, with hundreds more planned for the coming years. This work is taking place in the neighborhoods of Corona, Elmhurst, Forest Hills, Rego Park and Middle Village.

By 2030, DEP is planning for $2.4 billion in public and private funding for targeted green infrastructure installations, as well as $2.9 billion in cost-effective grey infrastructure upgrades, to significantly reduce CSOs. The construction of the Whitestone Interceptor Sewer was part of an agreement between DEP and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

The Tallman Island Wastewater Treatment Plant was first put into service in 1939. The plant receives wastewater from a roughly 17,000 acre portion of northern Queens with a population of about 400,000.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with nearly $14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter.

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